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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC GROWTH  
LANSING

STANLEY PRUSS  
DIRECTOR

**Michigan Commission on Spanish Speaking Affairs**  
Northwest Michigan Health Services  
10767 Traverse Hwy, M-72  
Traverse City, Michigan 49684

**June 4, 2010**  
**Meeting Minutes No. 276**

**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Acting Chairperson Olga Hernandez-Patino called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioners Present: Olga Hernández-Patino, Art Luna, Gil Guzman, Art Reyes, Mike Ramírez, Leonard Savala, Maria Elena Rodríguez, Michael Espinoza

Excused Absence: Lawrence Garcia, Fred Feliciano, Benjamin Inquilla, Rick García, Alicia Villarreal Debra Ehrmann

Unexcused Absence: Arminda García

Staff Present: Marylou Mason, Victoria García, Jacqueline Magdaleno, Leon Kababie

**II. Introduction of Commissioners**

Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

**III. Welcoming Remarks**

Ms. Gladys Munoz and Ms. Mary Moore welcomed the Commission on behalf of the center's director, Judy Williams.

**IV. Approval of Absences:**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Rodriguez motioned to approve the absences of Commissioner Feliciano, Ehrmann, Lawrence Garcia, Inquilla, Rick Garcia, and Villarreal. Commissioner Ramirez supported the motion. Motion carried.

**V. Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Guzman motioned to approve the agenda of June 4, 2010. Commissioner Luna supported the motion. Motion carried.

**VI. Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Luna motioned to approve the minutes of May 7, 2010. Commissioner Espinoza supported the motion. Motion carried.

## **VII. Public Forum**

### **Father Wayne Zeek, Catholic Priest, Diocese of Gaylord, Director for the Secretariat of Justice & Peace:**

Father Wayne welcomed the Commission to Traverse City. He commented that he attended MI Hispanic Advocacy Day and was very happy that he did. He met with three legislators and one legislators' staffer but couldn't remember which legislators he met with. He stated he was surprised by the negativity he experienced. He feels the negativity may have been because he is a Catholic Priest. Commissioner Espinoza stated he met with one of the representatives from Traverse City area and he was very receptive.

Commissioner Espinoza inquired about the migrant camp complaints he brought before the Commission a year or two ago. Father Zeek stated that last summer was a rough summer for the migrants. It was the worse summer he'd ever experienced with Detention & Immigration in regard to human rights issues. There were incidences with Leelanau County Sheriff's Dept., another in Leelanau county but they were unsure which law enforcement agency was involved, difficulties with the State Police troopers and the county sheriff. So far this season, Father Wayne says he has started to receive calls about detentions but no rights issues. He believes the calls he is receiving thus far are related to the immigration issues that are going on right now.

Commissioner Ramirez stated that at our last meeting, COSSA had wanted to have the Traverse City meeting in the evening to increase participation by the community. He inquired if it was thought that an evening meeting would be helpful. Ms. Gladys Munoz stated she felt that the evening would be a better time because they are working during the day.

Commissioner Hernandez-Patino inquired if meeting later in the month of June would be better. Ms. Munoz suggested visiting a camp or farm like a tour day. She offered to assist COSSA by organizing the visit.

Commissioner Guzman suggested that we have a tour early in the morning and then schedule a meeting later that day in the evening. Ms. Munoz stated that last year during the Civil Rights hearings in Manistee, some people wanted to go but didn't have transportation. Commissioner Guzman asked what was the largest camp in Traverse City and if they thought whether the Farmer would have a problem with the Commission having a meeting there. Ms. Munoz stated she didn't think the Farmer would have a problem with it at all. Commissioner Guzman said in his area they conduct "pack meetings" at the camps and include food. Ms. Munoz said we will get a good showing of people if food is offered. All agreed this was a great idea. She did add that June 15<sup>th</sup> was the magic date for strawberry pickers and July 15<sup>th</sup> was the magic date for cherry pickers. Father Wayne said that last year July 4<sup>th</sup> was the date for a very high number of ICE activity in Traverse City.

Ms. Munoz said ICE wasn't doing raids but was stopping cars for whatever reason, i.e. something hanging from your rearview mirror, and then asking for immigration papers. Father Wayne said last year that ICE was looking for specific people that they had on

record for previous violations. He said in one incident a farmer was approached by the State Police and they showed the farmer a picture of a worker and asked if he worked for the farmer. The farmer thought he looked like a particular person and based on that information, they arrested the man as being someone who was wanted for attempted murder in South Carolina. Father Zeek was told by a fellow worker, he went to the county jail and they told him he wasn't there and Father Zeek told them he had to be. They insisted they had no one by that name. Father Wayne called a friend who works for the Leelanau County Sheriff's Department for help. After investigating the matter, it was discovered they were holding the man under the name of the person who was wanted for the murder even though all of the documentation he provided to law enforcement had his real name on it. Once they realized they had the wrong man, they handed him over to ICE to be deported.

Commissioner Rodriguez inquired about whether the media was sympathetic to these types of cases. Father Wayne said there is very little coverage of these types of cases. Ms. Munoz and Ms. Mary Moore stated that the Northern Express publication is better at covering migrant issues and they have a younger more progressive demographic.

Commissioner Luna stated he fears with the Arizona immigration scenario and now with a pending Michigan bill that is being constructed, he thinks this will only escalate our concerns and problems. Father Wayne stated he is on the social policy committee with Michigan Catholic Conference in downtown Lansing. He recently received information from them on this bill and it is their thought that this bill will not make it out of committee. Visitor John Roy Castillo stated he feels they may be wrong and some Commissioners agreed. Ms. Mason stated the legislators that will be introducing that bill is running for the senate and she needs name exposure and this will accomplish that. Visitor John Roy Castillo inquired how many Hispanics on the Catholic Conference Policy Committee? Father Wayne stated none.

Commissioner Rodriguez inquired if there was anyone with clout in Traverse City that would be a champion or advocate for Hispanic issues. Father Wayne and Ms. Munoz both said that no one came to mind but would think about it.

Father Wayne stated he has been giving immigration presentations within the diocese. The presentations are a minimum of three hours long. He stated about a month ago he was invite to do a presentation at a library in Charlevoix for a civic peace group, Little Traverse League for Peace & Justice. There were 70-75 people in attendance. He was confronted by one participant who called him a liar, that he was giving out old information and he was misleading the people and called the bishop that he didn't want any of his contributions paying Father Wayne's salary. Father Wayne stated he was called into the Bishop Bernard Hepta's office. Commissioners inquired where the Bishop was from. Father Wayne indicated he was from Pennsylvania but had worked at the Vatican for the past 13 years. He said he is doing good work and keeping him working full-time against the advice of the counsel of priests. During the meeting he had to explain his presentation and said that not everyone is going to like what he has to say but he knows what he's talking about.

Acting Chair Hernandez-Patino stated she thinks it would be important for the office staff to work with Ms. Munoz on the planning for our next trip to Traverse City.

Commissioner Luna requested that Ms. Munoz and Father Wayne to keep in contact with the Commission in regard to problems they encounter through the year.

## **VIII. Executive Reports**

### Chairperson's Report:

Acting Chairperson Hernandez-Patino announced that COSSA has two new interns; Jacqueline Magdaleno from James Madison College/Michigan State University and Leon Kababie from Thomas M. Cooley Law School. This arrangement is good for the students as they learn about how state government operates but also good for the Commission and its work.

Acting Chairperson Hernandez-Patino stated there is a fundraiser invitation to the Commission for the Hispanic Center of Western Michigan on June 18, 2010.

### **B. Executive Director's Report:**

Director Mason entertained any questions in reference to her written report.

Director Mason stated she has been in contact with Speaker Dillon's Office in regard to SB 215. Hopefully the bill will be moving in the House soon. It's been through committee and its just waiting to be voted on. This bill will change the name of the Commission; it will reduce the number of yearly meetings, and will add the responsibility of coordinating Hispanic events. At the end of the year, our current Hispanic legislative caucus will end under term limits. Hopefully, the Hispanics that are running for office will win. The individuals running for state representative are Art Reyes and Harvey Santana. It is important that we support them. Commissioner Espinoza stated that a third individual from the west side of Michigan has filed but didn't know his name. Commissioners Rodriguez and Luna both reiterated the importance of supporting these individuals running for office.

## **IX. Committee Reports:**

Economic Development: No report. Commissioner Rodriguez did comment that the office has started to update the Hispanic Entrepreneur of the Year Award nomination process and to start thinking of possible individuals in your communities.

Education: No report. Commissioner Guzman commented that he wanted to thank and acknowledge all the hard work that Commissioner Olga Hernandez-Patino did to pull all the information on education in preparation for MI Hispanic Advocacy Day. The Commissioners gave her a round of applause.

Legislative & Civic Engagement: Commissioner Reyes stated that Rep. Kim Meltzer is introducing an Arizona copy-cat anti-immigration bill. An anti-immigration bill is being discussed in thirty other states. In Michigan, an argument is the economic factor of it. Municipalities are already drained and adding this extra burden on law enforcement to divert attention from legitimate threats to public safety to putting focus on immigrants. Commissioner Reyes met with a number of immigrant advocates with Speaker Dillon last month and he indicated that it is very unlikely that this bill will move through the

house. Many things point to this being a very politically driven bill. There has been a bill introduced by Rep. Talib in opposition to the Arizona bill and asking for a boycott of Arizona. He also indicated he moderated an event at St. Anne's in Southwest Detroit where Antonio Gusamante, president of the Arizona Civil Rights Commission and the Arizona Hispanic Bar Association, who spoke about what is happening in Arizona. He shared an article of a Mexican Judge who has been pulled over twice and asked for his papers. In Arizona, people who have lived there for year have already started feeling the impact of the new law. Commissioner Reyes stated this is an important issue that we need to keep our eyes on.

Visitor John Roy Castillo announced that as of July 1, 2010, Puerto Ricans have to get new birth certificates if they were born in Puerto Rico. Acting Chairperson stated that you can order your birth certificate online.

#### **X. Old Business:**

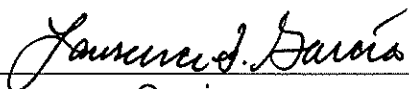
- 1) Commissioner Reyes asked Commission to please support his dad in his run for state representative. They are having a fundraiser in Lansing at The Firm Restaurant on June 23, 2010, 5:30pm
- 2) Commissioner Luna again asked the Commission to rally and support Mr. Art Reyes.
- 3) Acting Chairperson Hernandez-Patino congratulated Gil Guzman and Mike Ramirez on a successful Hispanic Student Summit and for hosting our Commissioner Meeting and lunch in Kalamazoo on May 7, 2010.

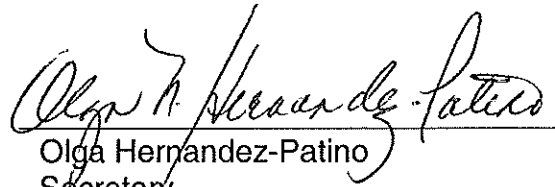
#### **XI. New Business:**

- 1) Acting Chairperson Hernandez-Patino suggested that we analyze and restructure our Commission sub-committees. All Commissioners should be assigned to a committee and actively work to accomplish the COSSA Strategic Plan.
- 2) Next meeting date and location - Lawrence, MI - July 30, 2010 ( if the SB 215 passes, this meeting will be cancelled)

**Adjournment at 11:40 a.m.**

Prepared by Commission staff:

  
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Lawrence Garcia  
Chairperson

  
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Olga Hernandez-Patino  
Secretary

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Date

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Date